I'VE GOT A QUESTION.
IF EBISAWA-SAN HATES PLAYING THE GUITAR, THEN WHY DOES SHE DO IT?
I DUN-NO...
TETSUROU THINKS IT MIGHT BE BECAUSE SHE STARTED HATING THE PIANO.
REALLY...
BUT ALL SHE PLAYS ON GUITAR ARE PIANO SONGS!
ALRIGHT THEN.
THERE MIGHT BE SOME UN-EXPECTED CLUES ON HOW TO GO ABOUT THIS IN HERE...
THE THREE OF THEM ARE PLAN-NING SOME-THING...

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO...
I UNDER-ESTIMATED YOU.
BUT SERIOUSLY, YOU REALLY GATHERED UP A LOT...
THE TEAM PLOTS A WAY TO DEFEAT EBISAWA MAFUYU!!
music shop NAGASHIMA

さよなら ピアノソナタ

Sayonara Piano Sonata

MANGA: AKASAKA AKA

ORIGINAL WORK: SUGII HIKARU

CHARACTER DESIGN: UEDA RYOU

CHAPTER 6: WHALES, PAGANINI, AND THE FIGHTERS

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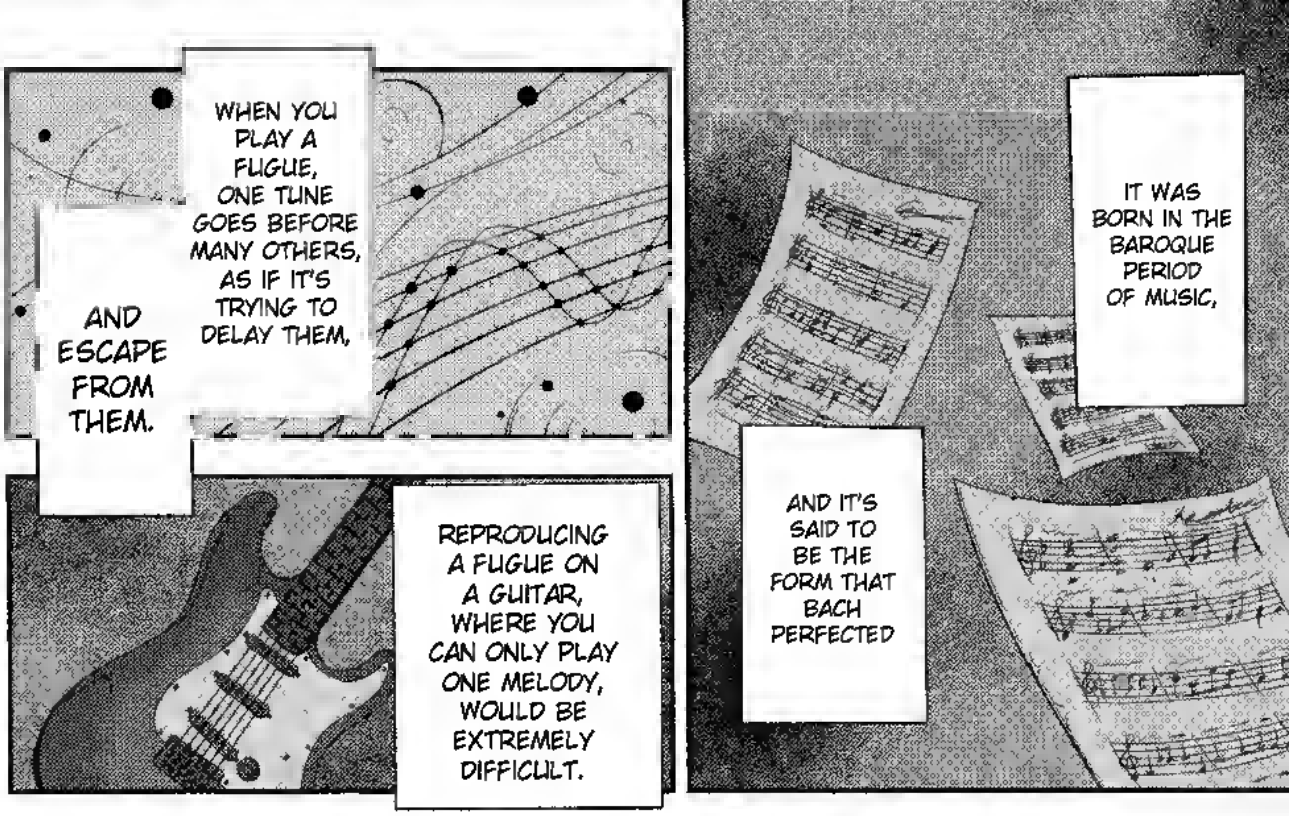
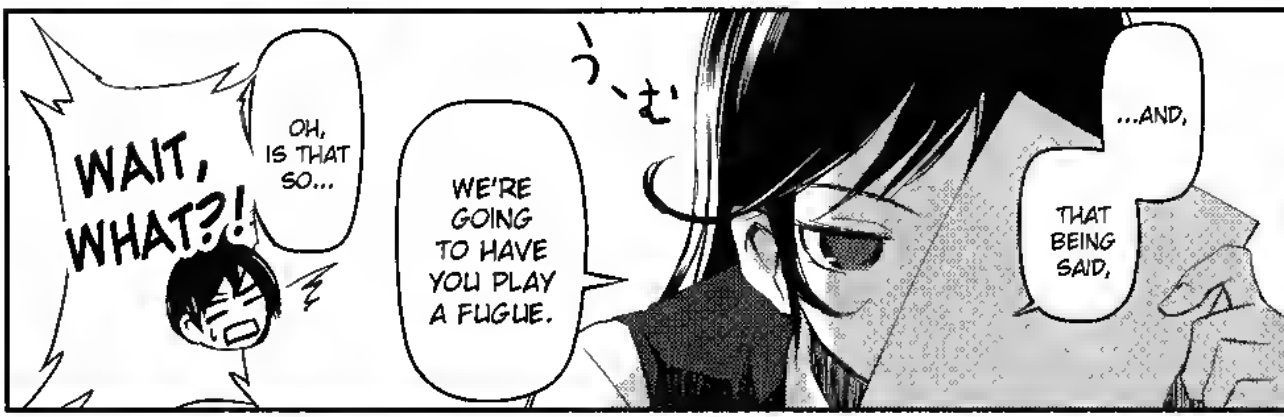
..BUT WHAT ARE WE GONNA LEARN BY LISTENING TO HER CDS?
JUST SO YOU KNOW, THIS IS ALL THE MUSIC EBISAWA MAFUYU HAS EVER RELEASED.
AS WELL AS ALL OF HER SHEET MUSIC.
SHE'S RELUCTANT TO PLAY THEM.
EVEN THOUGH HER FUGUES WERE HER BEST PERFORMANCES...
MOST OF THE SONGS IN HER REPERTOIRE ARE BACH, HUH.
THAT MEANS THAT THE REASON SHE DOESN'T PLAY FUGUES ON HER GUITAR...
IS THAT IT'S LITERALLY IMPOSSIBLE.
"FUGUE" IN ITALIAN MEANS "ESCAPE".
.....


IT WAS BORN IN THE BAROQUE PERIOD OF MUSIC,
AND IT'S SAID TO BE THE FORM THAT BACH PERFECTED
WHEN YOU PLAY A FUGUE, ONE TUNE GOES BEFORE MANY OTHERS, AS IF IT'S TRYING TO DELAY THEM,
AND ESCAPE FROM THEM.
REPRODUCING A FUGUE ON A GUITAR, WHERE YOU CAN ONLY PLAY ONE MELODY, WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.


うーむ
...AND, THAT BEING SAID,
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE YOU PLAY A FUGUE.
WAIT, WHAT?!
OH, IS THAT SO...

I THINK YOU KNOW THIS ALREADY, BUT IF YOU'RE COMPARING YOUR ABILITY AND HERS, YOU'RE A SPIDER, AND SHE'S A BLUE WHALE.
YOU'VE GOT TO PRACTICE HARD OR YOU CAN'T WIN.
I THINK IT'S MORE LIKE AN APPLE AND THE WHOLE EARTH SENPAI
YOU GUYS ARE TERR-IBLE.

BUT HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO IT...
HOLD ON! WE'RE PLAYING CLASS-ICAL?!
IT'S IM-POSSIBLE TO COMPETE WITH HER BACH...
DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD BEAT EBISAWA MAFUYU ANY OTHER WAY?
WELL, DUH.
WELL...
IF I PLAYED SOME COOL ROCK SONGS...
SHE'D THINK THEY WERE COOL, AND I'D WIN...
ARE YOU SOME MIDDLE SCHOOLER WHO WANTS GIRLS TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOU?!
JEEZ.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'LL WORK AGAINST HER AMA-ZING TECH-NIQUE?
FIRST OF ALL, YOU WANT TO BEAT HER ON HER OWN TURF.
.....?
THAT'S WHY OU CAN'T PLAY SOMETHING SHE DOESN'T KNOW.
YOU HAVE TO PLAY SOMETHING YOU CAN BOTH PLAY.
RIGHT, RIGHT.
YOU REALLY GET IT, DON'T YOU, AIHARA.
HEHE!
.....

BUT I GET IT...
SO I HAVE TO PLAY A FUGUE.
THE SONGS
THE SONGS THAT MAFUYU LIKES...
SHE CANNOT PLAY ON HER OWN.
WAIT, NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, THEY HAD ME PICK MY BASS SO THAT IT COULD MATCH UP WITH MAFUYU'S
WAIT, THIS IS ALL JUST A PLOT TO GET ME TO JOIN YOUR CLUB, ISN'T IT?!
YOU GOT ME!
BUT EVEN IF WE BRING IN A CONTEST BETWEEN YOU TWO...
YOU'D HAVE TO WORK WITH ME FOR A YEAR TO GET THE ABILITY TO DO SO, AND THAT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG...
I DON'T WANT TO! DON'T TAKE MY LIFE AWAY FROM ME LIKE THAT!
.....
...HEY, NAO.
DIDN'T SHE SAY
THAT SHE'D DISAPPEAR IN SIX MONTHS?

DISAPP-EAR?
WHAT'S THIS?
SHE SAID "I'M DIS-APPEARING IN SIX MONTHS, SO JUST FORGET ABOUT ME".
AND... THAT WAS IT.
I WONDER WHAT THAT MEANS. A TRAN-SFER?
MAYBE SHE'S GOING TO A MUSIC SCHOOL.
BUT SHE DID SAY THAT...
I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT IT TOO HARD BACK THEN, THOUGH...
THAT'S NOT GOOD, THEN.
SO WE'VE GOT TO GET OUR ACT TO...
GE-THER AND...
!

THAT'S IT.
PAGANINI'S GRANDE ETUDE NO. 1 (G MINOR)
THAT'S IT! PAGA-NINI!
HUH?
JUST DO WHAT HE DID...
AND YOU'LL WIN!

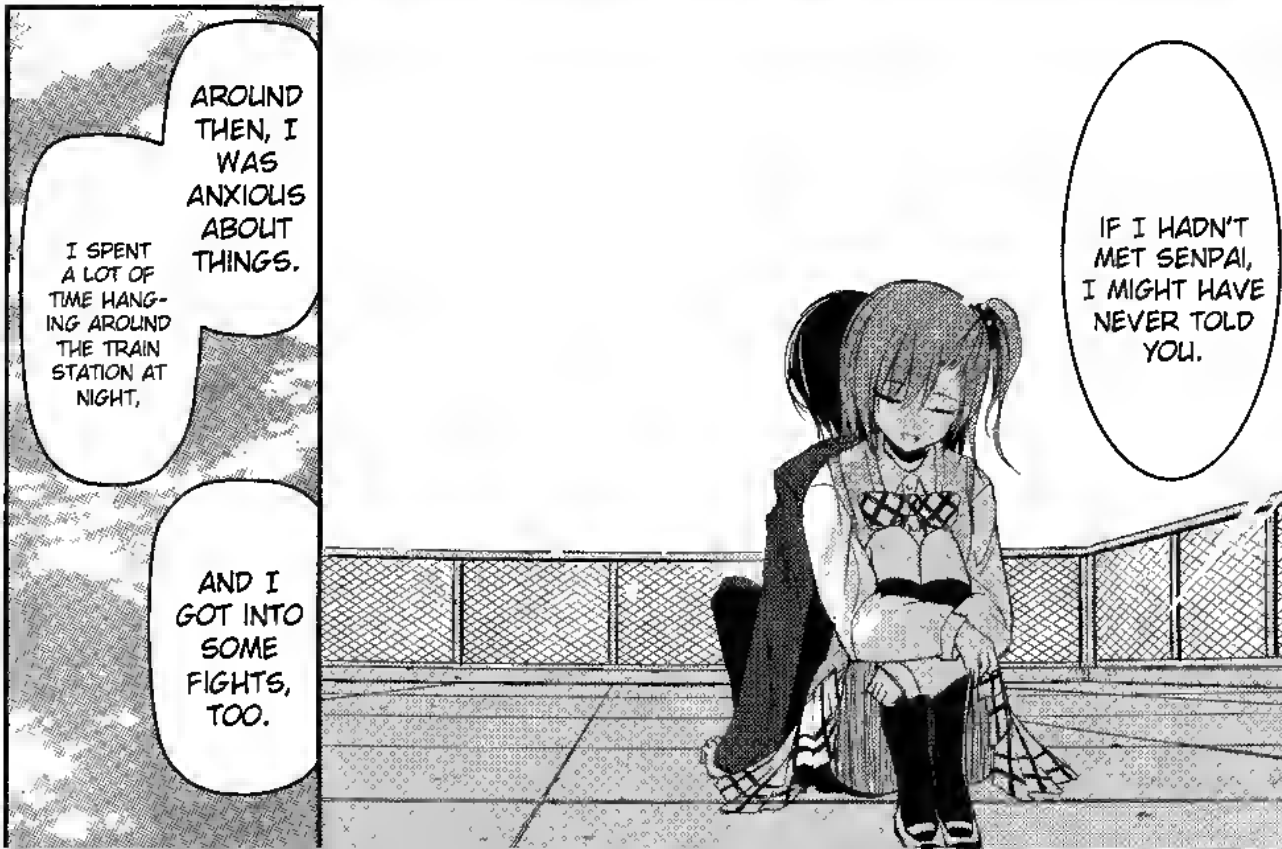
SEN-PAI...?
YOU'VE JUST GOTTA BORROW SOME OF HIS DEMON POWER!
THERE WAS AN AMAZING VIOLINIST THEY CALLED THE "DEMON"...
IS IT OKAY IF I BORROW THEM?!
THIS CD AND THIS BOOK!
UH, ER,
YEAH.
BOY!
IF YOU'RE GOING TO BEAT BEETHOVEN, YOU'VE GOT TO DO IT WITH BEETHOVEN... RIGHT!
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?!
UH...
SURE.

……
I'M JUST THE ONE WHO FILLS IN THE GAP.
SHE'S ONLY INTERE-STED IN MAFUYU.
SHE'S REALLY INTERE-STED IN YOU.
YOU KNOW.
SO IS EBI-SAWA-SAN.
A LOT OF THINGS.
……
…WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

HEY, CAN I TELL YOU SOME-THING?
ドカ…
SHE SAID I'M A FIGHT-ER.
A FIGHT-ER?
YUP.
THE FOLK MUSIC CLUB IS ACTUALLY AN ARMY AGAINST ALL THE HIDDEN THINGS IN THE WORLD.
I DON'T KNOW HOW SERIOUS SHE IS ABOUT ALL THAT,
SHE SAID WE'RE THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GUARD OR SOMETHING.
OR SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
BUT I THINK SHE'S EITHER SERIOUS ABOUT EVERYTHING,
OR IT'S A BIG JOKE.
EITHER WAY, I'M SURE IT'S NOT A BIG CRISIS.

BY THEN I'D ALREADY BEEN TOLD BY MY DOCTOR THAT I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO PRACTICE JUDO AGAIN.
ACTUALLY,
YOU REMEMBER THAT I GOT HURT BEFORE THE BIG COMPETITION LAST YEAR, RIGHT?
.....
YOU TOLD ME HE TOLD YOU THAT AROUND NEW YEAR'S.
I LIED.

I WAS REALLY HURT BY THE NEWS.
BUT SOMEONE LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE EVEN MORE HURT BY IT THAN I WAS.


AROUND THEN, I WAS ANXIOUS ABOUT THINGS.
I SPENT A LOT OF TIME HANGING AROUND THE TRAIN STATION AT NIGHT,
AND I GOT INTO SOME FIGHTS, TOO.
IF I HADN'T MET SENPAI, I MIGHT HAVE NEVER TOLD YOU.

I THOUGHT I COULD TAKE ON THREE GUYS AT ONCE...
BUT I REALIZED THAT I WAS STILL REALLY WEAK WITHOUT THE USE OF MY HIPS.
I RAN INTO A CONCERT HALL TO TRY TO GET AWAY,
AND SENPAI OFFERED TO HIDE ME.
A LOT OF STUFF'S HAPPENED, BUT THERE'S NOTHING I CAN REALLY GIVE HER IN REPAYMENT.
SO I THOUGHT I'D PAY HER BACK WITH MY SERVICE.
THE END.
SENPAI SAID THAT SHE NEEDS ONLY THREE PEOPLE TO HELP START A REVOLUTION.
A CHAIRMAN, A SECRETARY,
AND SOMEONE TO "CONDUCT" THE ARMY.
THAT'S WHY ALL SHE NEEDS NOW IS BEISAWA-SAN.
DON'T INCLUDE ME IN YOUR COUNTING THERE.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU'RE A FIGHTER.
YEP.

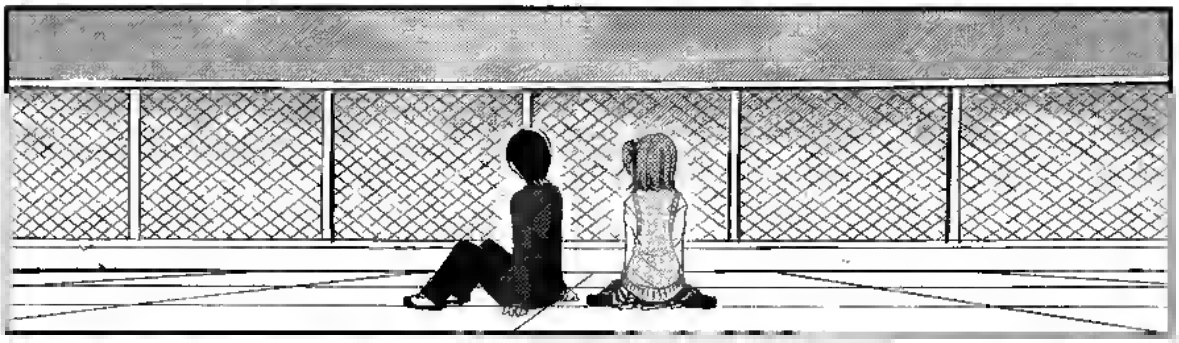
GAH!!
WHOOP!
▼■ッ
*×
!?Ω
OF COURSE YOU'RE IN THERE.
I MEAN, YOU EVEN BOUGHT A BASS.
THAT WAS JUST FOR...
.....
THAT WAS JUST FOR WHAT?

FOR EBI-SAWA-SAN?
IS THAT IT?

WHY ARE YOU GOING THAT FAR?
IT'S...
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU, NAO...
YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY ENTHU-SIASM FOR IT BEFORE...
BUT YOU'RE PRACT-ICING SO HARD NOW.
SOMEHOW, YOU'RE DOING REAL WELL, TOO!
IF YOU WERE THE NORMAL NAO, YOU'D BE...
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT
WHAT WAS IT AGAIN?

FOR THE SAKE OF GETTING MY ROOM BACK... WELL, I COULDN'T REALLY SAY THAT.
BECAUSE IF I JUST WANTED A PLACE TO LISTEN TO MY CDS, THERE ARE PLENTY OF EASIER OPTIONS.
TO PRO-TECT ROCK MUSIC?
MY OWN DIG-NITY?
NO MATTER HOW I TRY TO PUT THAT INTO WORDS, IT JUST DOESN'T COME OUT RIGHT.
BUT
ANY-WAYS
I NEVER

REALLY NEEDED TO COMPETE WITH HER



WELL, YOU *ARE* NAO,

AND YOU HAVEN'T REALLY SAID ANYTHING ABOUT IT...

HEY.

HOW DID YOU MEET EBISAWA-SAN?

WHY'RE YOU ASKING ME THAT?

I WANT TO BE EBI-SAWA-SAN'S FRIEND, TOO.

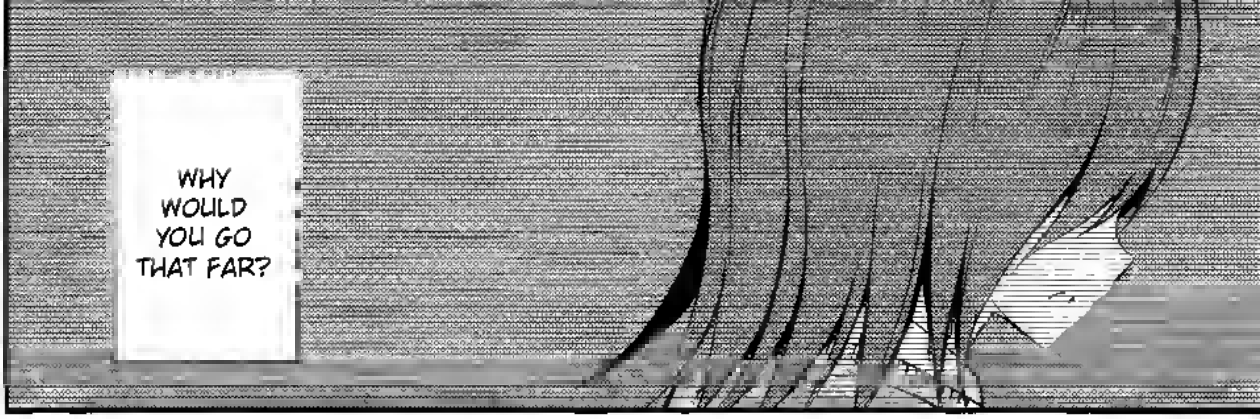
AND SENPAI TOLD ME HOW SHE MET HER TOO, SO... PLEASE?

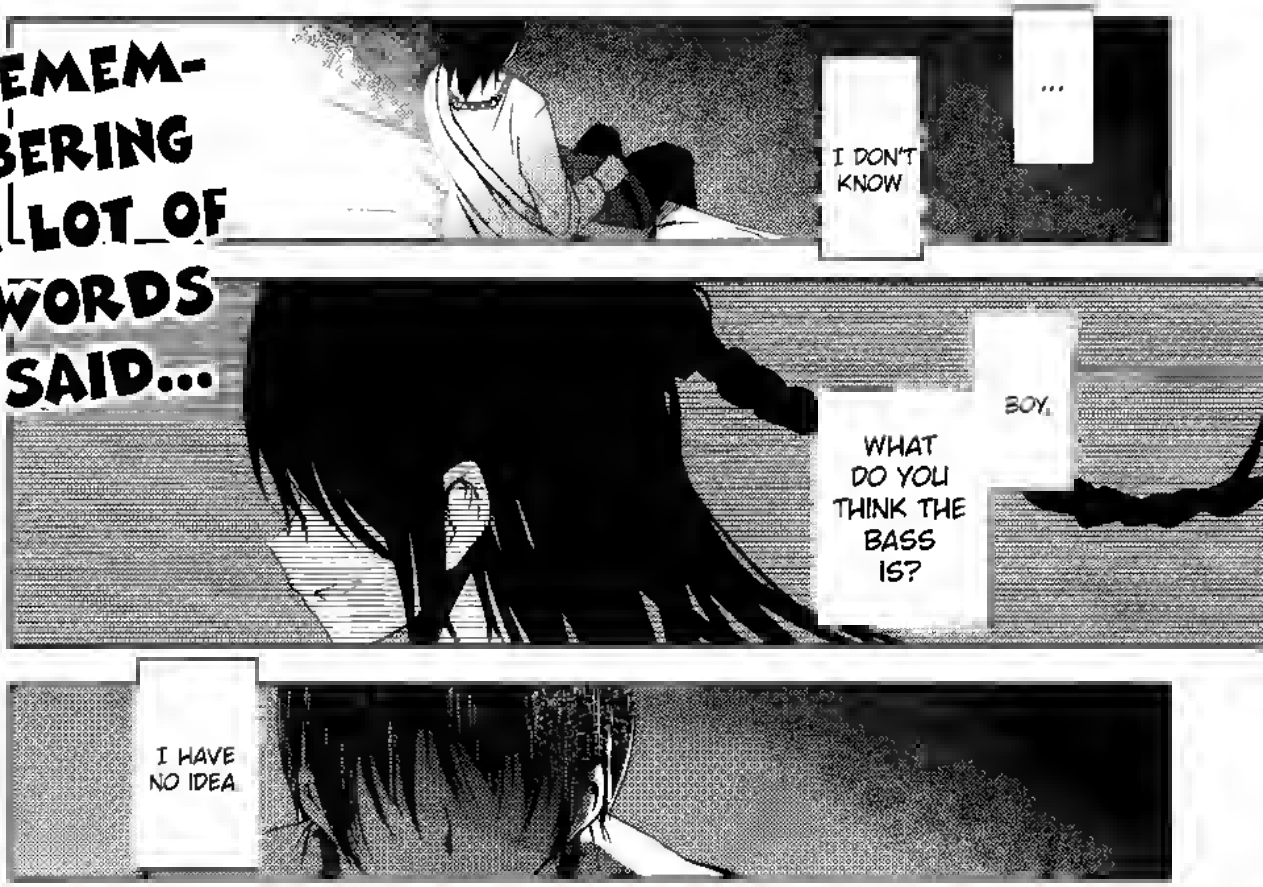
Huh... well,
It's kind of hard to explain, but...
uh-huh
So over spring break...
Yeah?

さわ...
さわ...

NAO, CAN I OPEN IT?
OKAY, WE'RE OPENING IT.
WHAT?! IS THIS A PRESENT?! THIS IS BAD, NAO, WHAT'S WITH THIS?!
OH...
UH...
WHAT'S THIS?
IRON MAIDEN
HUH?
.....
MM.
DID YOU BUY IT FOR ME?
AH...
THANKS.
OH...
THIS.
HERE, SEN-SEI.
DON'T SHOW IT TO ME, IT'S DIS-GUSTING!
OH, THAT...
BUT YOU KNOW...
Though you do kind of look like that zombie.
She's not talking about you
I can't live on this planet anymore.
And she said "disgu-sting" again.
OHH, THAT WAS THE ONE THAT GOT BROKEN AND YOU WERE ALL DEPRESSED ABOUT.

THAT'S NOT THEIR FIRST ALBUM.
IT'S THEIR SECOND ALBUM, RIGHT?
1st
X 2nd
drawing: chiaki☆
DON'T SAY...
.....
HUH?
THINGS LIKE THAT!
THE DESIGN LOOKS THE SAME, BUT IT'S NOT HOLDING AN AXE ON THE...
SHUT UP!
...!
I...
I...
I... I'LL GO BUY YOU THE RIGHT ONE!
WAIT, CLASS IS STARTING!
I'M GOING!
OH JEEZ, IT'S ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER!
CHIAKI GOT A LITTLE BIT OF REVENGE!♪
TO BE CONTINUED


WHY WOULD YOU GO THAT FAR?


REMEMBERING A LOT OF WORDS SAID...
...
I DON'T KNOW
BOY.
WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BASS IS?
I HAVE NO IDEA

HEY, IS THE BASS...FUN?

さよなら
Sayonara Piano Sonata
ピアノソナタ

CHAPTER 7
MUSIC, THE HEART, AND THE HEAT

MANGA: AKASAKA AKA
ORIGINAL WORK: SUGII HIKARU
CHARACTER DESIGN: UEDA RYOU

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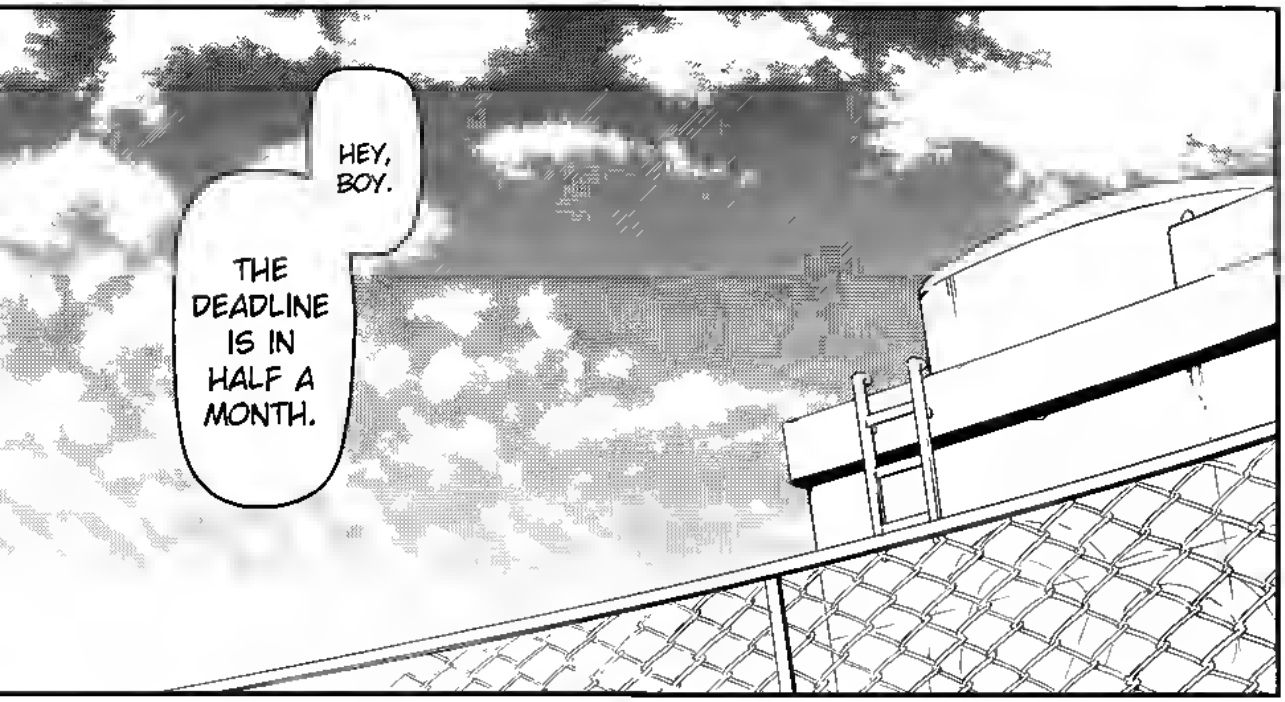
ONE WEEK AGO


HEY, BOY.
THE DEADLINE IS IN HALF A MONTH.

YOU HAVE TO MASTER THIS BY THEN.

HUH.
THIS IS...

THAT BEET-HOVEN SOME-THING PIECE...
SENPAI WENT THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE TO ARRANGE IT FOR THE BASS!

THE PIECE YOU'LL USE TO FIGHT EBISAWA-SA.
BE GRATE-BUL!

...
NO NEED TO PRAISE ME.
AS EXPEC-TED!

ER...
...WELL.
UM,
.....
WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S IMPOSS-IBLE
FOR ME
TO PLAY SOME-THING LIKE THIS.

...
"DO WHAT YOU WANT"
...GH.

I DON'T EVEN HAVE ENOUGH TIME...
MY FINGERS STILL WON'T MOVE THE WAY I WANT THEM TO
IF I COULD ONLY BE LIKE MAFUYU...
SEN-SEI!
SEN-SEI!
ANY? ANY RESEM-BLANCE?
NOPE. SHE MUST LOOK LIKE HER MOM
I HEARD THAT THEY DON'T GET ALONG.
IS THAT SO...
HUH
WHAT?
I HEARD MAFUYU'S FATHER IS IN JAPAN RIGHT NOW.
HE WAS ON TV YESTER-DAY.
NAO'S FATHER KNEW EBISAWA'S DAD WAY BACK WHEN, RIGHT?
...
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
MAKI-CHAN-SENSEI TOLD US.
HMM...
WHEN EBISAWA'S DAD WAS A TEACHER AT THE MUSIC UNIVERSITY, YOUR FATHER ALSO WENT THERE AND TRIED TO PICK UP GIRLS.

SHE ALSO TOLD US A LOT OF INTERESTING THINGS.
HALF A YEAR?!
LIKE HOW SHE ONLY STARTED PLAYING THE GUITAR HALF A YEAR AGO...
ONLY HALF A YEAR...
WELL SHE'S A PROGIDY AFTER ALL!
NAO-KUN, HOW DID YOU GET TO KNOW THE PRINCESS?
WHEN THEY ASKED HIM ABOUT HIS DAUGHTER ON TV, HE TRIED TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?
DID SHE STOP PLAYING PIANO OR SOMETHING?
I DON'T KNOW.
I'M BUSY ENOUGH WITH MY OWN PROBLEMS.
JUST LEAVE MAFUYU ALONE.
I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF OTHERS.
WHEN SHE WAS TOURING AMERICA,
I HEARD SOME CRITIC SAID SHE WAS AWFUL.

SHE'S LIKE A HURT ANIMAL. SHE'LL COME BACK TO YOU IF YOU JUST LEAVE HER ALONE.
SOMETHING LIKE SHE PLAYED LIKE A MECHANICAL DOLL...
AND THAT SHE WAS ONLY LIKED BECAUSE OF HER PARENTS OR SOMETHING.
BESIDES, WE'RE JUST NORMAL PEOPLE. HOW COULD WE UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE'S THINKI...

WAIT...
WHAT DID I JUST SAY?

...
SURE WAS EASY FOR YOU TO SAY THAT...

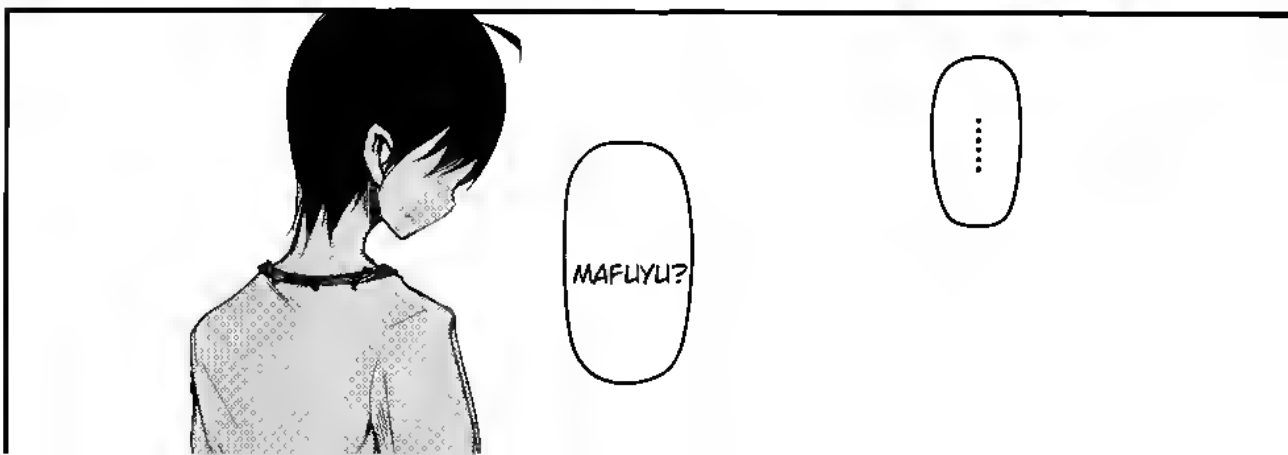
I WAS JUST SPACING OUT AND I...
I DIDN'T MEAN IT, I'M SORRY!
N...
NO, THAT WAS...
WELL, YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
スッ
IT'S ALL...
TRUE.

MA-FU-YU!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO...
CARE SO MUCH ABOUT ME.
I'LL BE GONE IN JUNE, ANYWAYS.
AFTER THAT, YOU CAN HAVE YOUR ROOM BACK AND USE IT HOWEVER YOU WANT.
SO...
SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO FORCE YOURSELF
TO PLAY THE BASS.

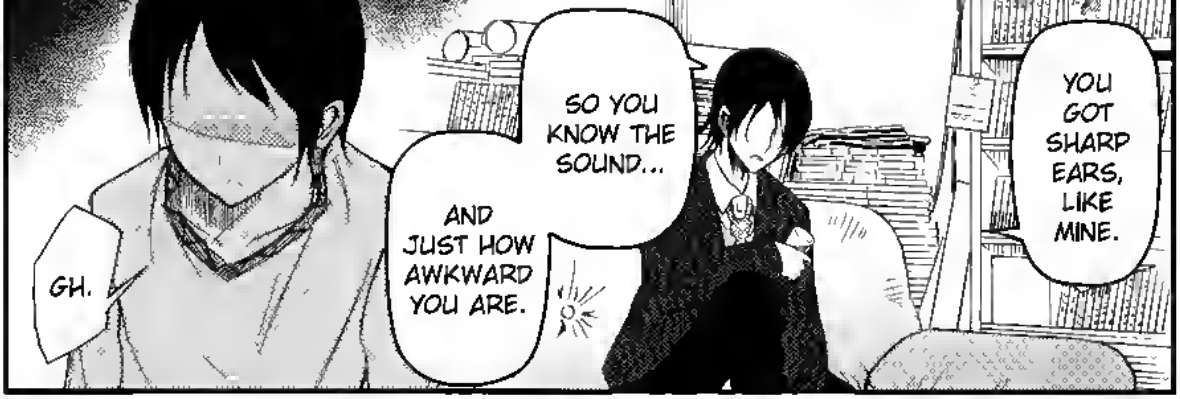
SO JUST FORGET ABOUT ME.
WHAT DID I JUST DO?
NAO-KUN!
NAO-KUN!
AM I STUPID OR WHAT?
DOING USELESS THINGS LIKE THAT
GETTING HOT-HEADED LIKE THAT

PHEW, I'M BACK ALIVE!
I'M REALLY A BLESSED PERSON.
EVEN THOUGH MY WIFE LEFT ME, I STILL GOT A GOOD SON TO TAKE CARE OF ME.
IF YOU'RE GONNA BE OUT LATE DRINKING WITH YOUR FRIENDS, YOU COULD AT LEAST CALL ME.

SORRY, SORRY.
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME US MUSIC U CLASSMATES HAD MET UP IN A LONG TIME...
EVERYONE WAS BAD-MOUTHING EBISAWA.


.....
MAFUYU?

NAH, ONLY HER DAD.
RIGHT NOW, EBISAWA'S HAVING PERFORM-ANCES ALL OVER JAPAN.
WE INVITED HIM TO HAVE A DRINK WITH US BUT HE DECLINE, SAYING HE HAD SOME CONCERT SOME-WHERE.
HE'LL BE BUSY IN JAPAN UNTIL THE END OF THE MONTH.
RIGHT BEFORE HE GOES ON TOUR IN AMERICA IN JUNE.
...
JUNE.
THAT'S HOW IT IS.
カラ
ALTHOUGH WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE BRINGS...
YOU, FOR EX-AMPLE, HAVE YOU FINALLY GOT YOUR SHARE OF WOMEN?
DID YOU THROW IT OUT ALREADY?
YOUR BASS HAS STOPPED SOUNDING AWKWARD AS OF LATE.
SURE IT IS!
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
JUST LIKE YOU DID WITH THE GUITAR?


YOU GOT SHARP EARS, LIKE MINE.
SO YOU KNOW THE SOUND...
AND JUST HOW AWKWARD YOU ARE.
GH.

THAT'S RIGHT.
I'M NOT GIFTED LIKE THAT PERSON.
AND I DIDN'T WORK HARD ENOUGH.

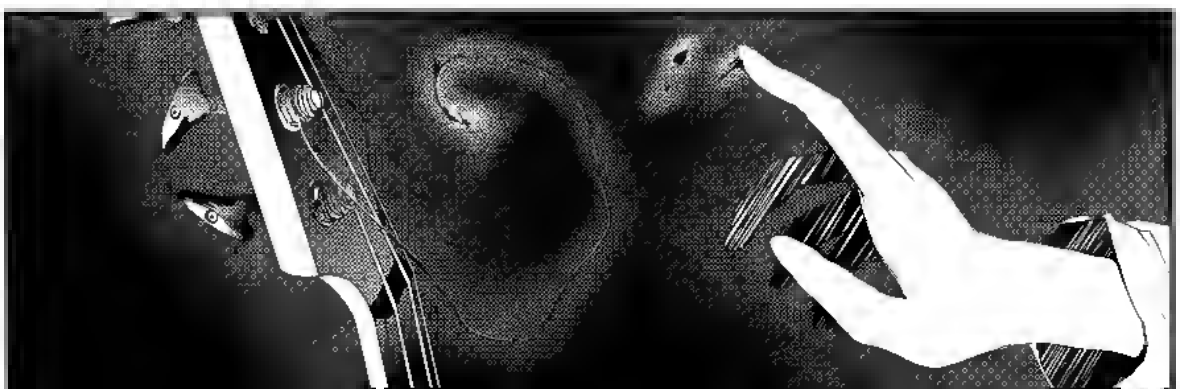
OF COURSE I KNOW!
...
I KNOW.

...
HEY, NAO-KUN.

GREAT PARENTS...
WILL USUALLY HAVE CHILDREN WHO BECOME GREAT ARTISTS AS WELL.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH PARENTS ARE PRAISED FOR THEIR TALENTS...
THOSE TALENTS WILL NOT PASS ON TO THEIR CHILDREN.
A CHILD SUFFERS AND WORKS HARD TO MEET THEIR EXPECTATIONS.
BUT WITH THE PRESSURES AND COMPLEXES GIVEN TO THEM BY THEIR PARENTS AND FAMILIES...
THAT'S HOW IT'S ALWAYS BEEN.

SO...
SO, DO YOUR BEST,
NAO.

ヒ〃〉



WHY...
WHY DID I
EVEN START PLAYING THE BASS?
THE BROKEN STRING WAS SAYING
"YOU CAN'T DO IT" TO ME
I DECIDED THAT DAY
NAO HAS LOST HIS WEAPON... WILL HE GET OVER THIS...?
TO STOP PLAYING THE BASS
TO BE CONTINUED

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TRANSLATION, CLEANING BY NIARAETH
SCANS, QC, AND TYPESETTING BY ANON BLACK

WHY DID I EVEN START PLAYING THE BASS...
さびしがり ヒーローノオト
THE THOUGHTS STUCK IN HIS HEAD...
knock knock

さよならピアノソナタ
Sayonara Piano Sonata
MANGA: AKASAKA AKA
ORIGINAL WORK: SUGII HIKARU
CHARACTER DESIGN: UEDA RYOU
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CHAPTER 8: MUSIC, THE HEART, AND THE HEAT (PART 2)
VOLUME 1, NOW ON SALE! SUPPORT AKASAKA AKA!

WHY AREN'T YOU COMING UP TO THE ROOF ANY-MORE?
YOU WENT STRAIGHT HOME AFTER SCHOOL, TOO...
SENPAI'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW.
ボス
ボス
WHY DON'T YOU JUST GET IT REPLACED AT SENPAI'S SHOP THEN?
ボス
ボス
A STRING BROKE ON MY BASS, SO...
.....

...
.....
...
MAY-
BE.
DO
YOU...
WANT TO
STOP
PLAYING?
I THOUGHT
WE COULD
PLAY TOGE-
THER IN A
BAND...
JUST
WHEN...

HM.
TAK TAKATAK TAKATAK TAKATAKA TAKA
TAK TAKATAK TAKATAK TAKA TAKA TAKA
THAT HURTS, CHIAKI...
OF COURSE IT DOES.

ANYONE WOULD BE HURT
AFTER TAKING A DIRECT HIT TO THE HEART.
DO YOU...
KNOW WHAT SONG THIS IS?
JUST LIKE HOW THE SONG "STAND BY ME" IS FOR THE BASS
.....
THERE ARE ALSO SONGS MADE FOR THE DRUMS
BUT
CHIAKI AND I HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER SINCE KINDER-GARTEN, AND WE'VE BEEN LISTENING TO THE SAME MUSIC. THIS COULD BE A SMALL MIRACLE FOR US.

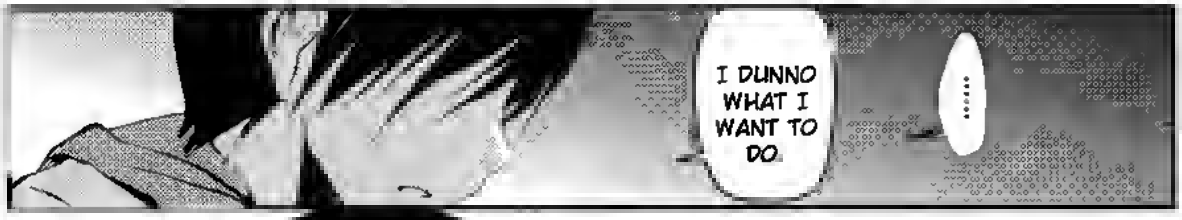
IT'S UNICORN'S "HIGE TO BOIN", RIGHT?
!
DOWNLOAD THE HQ VERSION OF THIS CHAPTER FROM OUR WEBSITE TO GET MP3S OF THESE SONGS!
IT'S "TRUE ASIA" BY PUFFY.
Though you got the middle part right.
THAT WAS A TRICK QUESTION!
AND HERE I WAS THINKING WE HAD A SPECIAL BOND...
YOU FINALLY SHOWED YOUR FACE.

THERE'S STILL THAT

POUNDING PAIN IN MY HEART

HEY, NAO-KUN. CHIAKI-CHAN JUST CAME OVER...
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU TO...
WH...
ER.

YOU COULD SELL IT IF YOU WON'T USE IT ANYMORE.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH YOUR BASS?
.....


I DUNNO WHAT I WANT TO DO.
.....

WHAT SHOULD I DO
REA-LLY?

OR SOME BASS STRINGS.

I SHOULD HAVE BOUGHT THE ICE AFTER-WARDS...
AH.
SOME-HOW I ENDED UP HERE.
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE COMING HERE.
MAKES ME HA-PPY.
shop SHIMA

FIRST OFF, I'VE GOT TO APOLOGIZE TO YOU.
TO BE HONEST,
I MADE SOME ADJUSTMENTS TO THAT STRING SO IT WOULD SNAP EASILY.
FOR WHAT?
...WHY?
YOU'RE NOT THE FOCUSED TYPE, RIGHT?
SO I FIGURED WHEN YOU GOT BORED OF PRACTICING, YOU'D SHUT YOURSELF IN AT HOME.
BUT IF YOUR STRING BROKE, YOU'D HAVE AN EXCUSE TO GO OUT, RIGHT?
SO I'LL REPLACE YOUR STRING FOR FREE.
THIS PERSON...

HOW FAR ARE YOU INTO THAT PIECE?
I'M AT THE 4TH VARIATION...
I HAVEN'T GOTTEN PAST THAT...
IT'S PRETTY DIFFICULT.
THERE ARE NO MORE SPECIAL TECHNIQUES.
YOU SHOULD BE OKAY TO PLAY IT AT HALF SPEED.
.....
YOU COULD HAVE GONE TO MAFUYU INSTEAD, SENPAI.
SHE'S WAY BETTER THAN I AM...
IT HAD TO BE YOU.

YOU KNOW,
LONG BEFORE I EVEN MET MAFUYU,
I HAD MY EYES SET ON YOU.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE MAGAZINE "MUSIC'S FRIEND"?
TWO YEARS AGO, IN THE JULY ISSUE, THERE WAS A CRITIQUE TITLED "HANDEL AND SCRIPTURES".
IT WAS ABOUT HOW ALL OF HANDEL'S COMPOSITIONS COULD BE READ AS POEMS.
IT WAS A FAR-FETCHED THEORY,
BUT IT WAS A MYSTERIOUS AND FASCINATING READ.

THE AUTHOR OF THE ESSAY WAS HIKAWA TETSUROU, A WELL-KNOWN CRITIC,
BUT I FELT THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG.
THERE WERE PARTS OF THE ESSAY THAT FELT LIKE THEY WERE WRITTEN BY A MIDDLE SCHOOLER.
AND TERMS THAT WERE USED THAT HIKAWA WOULDN'T HAVE LEARNED IN SCHOOL.
I GOT SUSPICIOUS.
SO I WENT THROUGH ALL THE PREVIOUS ISSUES,
AND CHECKED FOR ALL THE ESSAYS WRITTEN BY HIM.
AND THEN,
I FOUND MORE ESSAYS THAT HAD THE SAME "WRONG" FEELING ABOUT THEM.
AT THE TIME, I WAS SURE THAT HE HAD SOMEONE WHO WAS WRITING FOR HIM.
BUT OF COURSE, IT WAS JUST A THEORY OF MINE, AND I COULDN'T PROVE IT.

I WAS STUCK.
I HAD NO CONNECTIONS TO THE PUBLISHER.
MY ONLY CLUE
WAS THE NAME OF HIS SON THAT HE MENTIONED, "NAO-KUN".
THAT'S WHY...
AT THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY...
WHEN I SAW HIKAWA WITH HIS SON...

MY HEART SKIPPED A BEAT.
I'D FINALLY FOUND YOU.
YOU'RE THE ONE.
I WANT YOU!

I DON'T KNOW WHY I SHOULD BE IN A BAND...
THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT ME.
I SUCK AT THE BASS.
I CAN'T BE CONSISTENT, EITHER.
.....
...HM.
THAT'S TRUE, BUT...
AI-HARA!
STOP HIDING OVER THERE AND GET OVER HERE!
ビクッ

SEN-PAI!!
DON'T CALL ME OUT WHEN YOU'RE TALKING TO NAO ABOUT THAT!
SORRY, SORRY.
AH, RIGHT, AIHARA.
DO YOU HAVE YOUR DRUM STICKS WITH YOU?
GOOD, GOOD.
THEN LET'S GET GOING!
GOING...?
THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY'S GOT TO HAVE ITS SECRETARY.
AND THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN BE THAT
IS EBISAWA MAFUYU!
SO LET'S CAPTURE HER, RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW.

BOY.
BANG!
LET'S LIGHT THE FIRE!
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SOMETHING HARD

REA-
DY?
JUST KEEP PLAYING "D" IN EIGHTH NOTES ALONG WITH THE DRUMS.
THAT'S ALL.
HAA

NAO!

LED ZEPPLIN
"KASHMIR"
AT THAT TIME, I WAS SURE
THAT I COULD HEAR
THE MUSIC BURNING IN MY VEINS

BOY!
WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BASS IS?
IF YOU WERE TO COMPARE A BAND TO A PERSON...

THE VOCALIST WOULD BE THE HEAD
THE GUITARIST THE HAND
AND THE DRUMS THE FEET
SO...
WHAT WOULD THE BASS BE?

WITH-
OUT
YOU,
NONE
OF US
COULD
MOVE
ON.
GOT
IT?
IT'S
THE
HEART.

GO ON?
SHALL WE...
IF A BAND...
ドゥ
ドゥ
WERE A PER-SON...

BUT FOR THE FIRST TIME,
I WAS DROWNING IN MY OWN SOUND, AND I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD.
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD HAVE FOLLOWED THAT EXPLANATION BEFORE.
IF I HAD KEPT SHUTTING MYSELF IN AND ONLY LISTENED TO CDS...
I PROBABLY WOULD HAVE NEVER KNOWN.
I'M SURE
THAT THAT'S WHAT SENPAI WAS THINKING.

IF MAFUYU WERE HERE...
I CAME TO SAY I'M SORRY.
.....
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

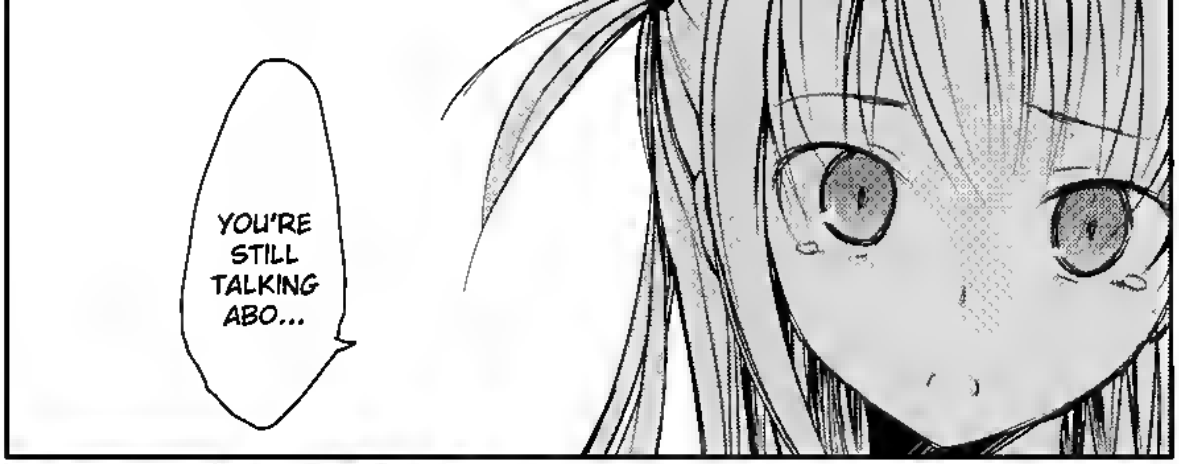
I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING, SO PLEASE LISTEN TO ME.
I DON'T REALLY CA...
YOU'RE FREE TO SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT.
FOR WHAT?
I KNEW...
THAT THERE WERE CRITICS IN AMERICA WHO WROTE AWFUL THINGS ABOUT YOU.
AND I KNEW HOW MUCH YOU HATED THEM AFTERWARDS.
BUT YOU'RE NOT A CRITIC.
ONLY YOUR DAD IS.
SO WHY ARE YOU SAYING THIS?
I SAID SIMILAR THINGS ABOUT YOU, TOO.
I'M A CRITIC, TOO.
LOOK, I SAID YOU'RE NOT...

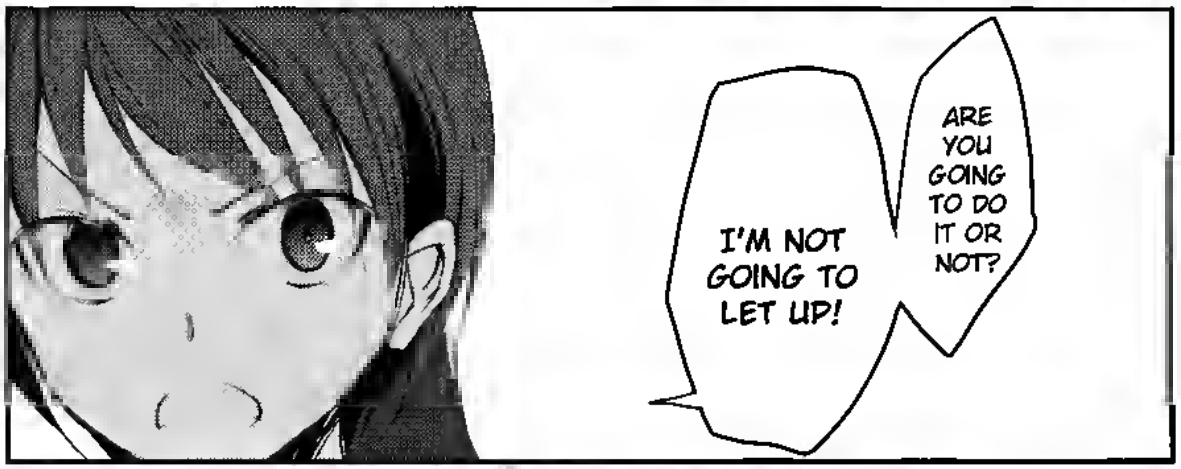
THAT'S THE TRUTH.
I'VE WRITTEN 4 OR 5 ARTICLES IN MY DAD'S NAME FOR MAGAZINES.
SO I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE FOR MY OWN THOUGHTLESS WORDS.
.....
I DON'T GET IT.
WHAT'S THIS FOR...
WHY ARE YOU...
APO-LOGI-ZING?
I'VE DONE SO MANY MEAN THINGS TO YOU...
WHY...
DO YOU STILL CARE ABOUT ME?
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO WROTE THE CRI-TIQUE...
OR WHAT WAS WRITTEN IN IT...
ALL THAT DOESN'T MAT-TER...

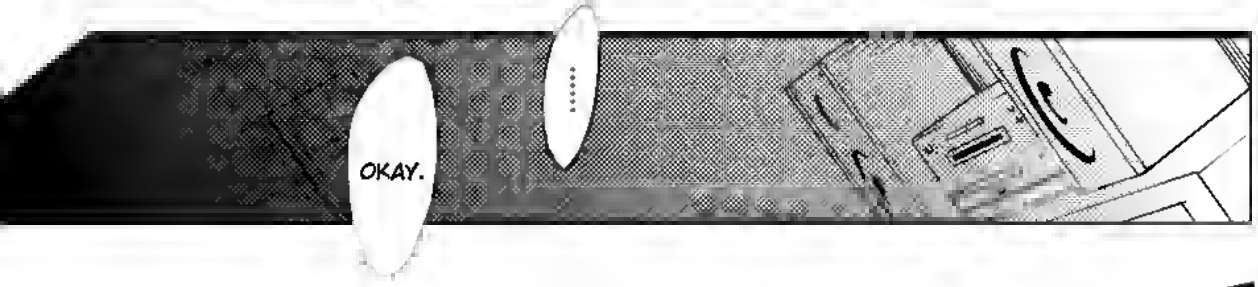
IF ONLY HER GUITAR WERE HERE

TO CONVEY THIS BURNING FEELING TO MAFUYU

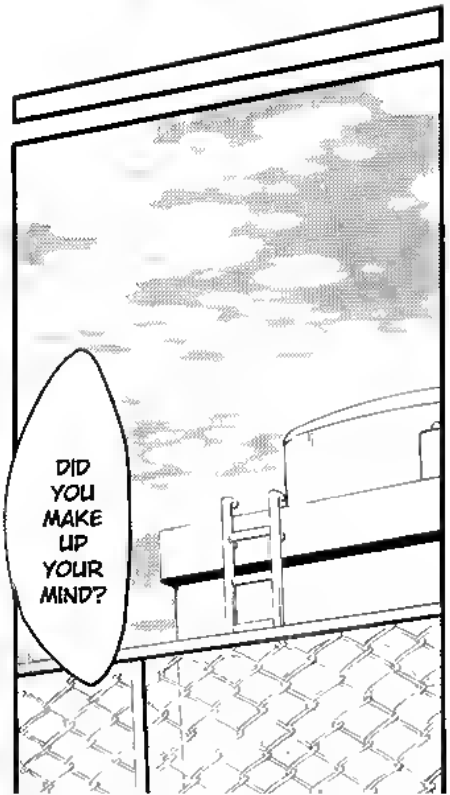
EBI-SAWA MAFU-YU!
I CHAL-LENGE YOU TO A DUEL!
HUH?
.....
LET'S HAVE A DUEL...
BETWEEN MY BASS AND YOUR GUITAR, ON THE LAST FRIDAY IN MAY!
IF I CAN KEEP UP WITH YOU UNTIL THE END OF THE SONG, THEN YOU LOSE!
I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ANYTHING YOU'VE SAID TO ME.
"DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN KEEP UP WITH ME ON THE BASS?"
"CAN YOU STILL SAY THAT YOU CAN PLAY THE GUITAR?"
I RE-MEMBER YOU SAYING THAT!
AND CALLING ME A STALKER, TOO!
ALL OF IT!


YOU'RE STILL TALKING ABO...


ARE YOU GOING TO DO IT OR NOT?
I'M NOT GOING TO LET UP!


.....
OKAY.

PLEASE DON'T HOLD BACK.
TEACH ME HOW TO PLAY THE BASS.
YES.


DID YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND?

I PROMISED YOU THAT, RIGHT?
THAT I'D SHOW YOU HOW TO WIN.
THAT'S WHAT I INTENDED ON DOING.
SO...
GO WIN, BOY.
I WILL.
NAO'S EVEN MORE DETERMINED!!
TO BE CONTINUED
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